

BOB KENNEDY RAISES MILLION FOR RANSOM

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Phone Call Does the Trick for Castro Payoff

SEE EDITORIAL

Turn to the editorial page for "The Ransom to Castro," an editorial discussing the ransom of Cuban prisoners and relatives.

BY WILLIAM ANDERSON

[Chicago Tribune Press Service]

Washington, Dec. 26—Atty. Gen. Robert F. Kennedy raised one million dollars in cash for Cuban Premier Fidel Castro as part of the ransom payment to clinch the release of the Bay of Pigs invasion prisoners.

This was confirmed today by a government source as additional details of the behind the scenes maneuvering for the prisoner exchange became available to reporters.

The source, who asked not to be quoted, said the attorney general raised the money with one phone call made on Sunday afternoon. One of the conditions of the donation was that the donor's name would not be made public. It was not known whether the individual would receive a tax break from the contribution.

Castro Demands Cash

Kennedy asked for the money after Castro mentioned during last minute negotiations over the 1,113 Cuban prisoners that he had never received the 2.9 million dollars promised for the release of 60 badly wounded prisoners last April.

Castro made this demand to James B. Donovan, the New York lawyer who has been handling the prisoner negotiations with the Cuban government since the Kennedy administration.

Sources said that Castro hinted he would hold up the release of the 1,113 Cubans now in Florida unless he received the cash, which was in addition to the 53 million dollars in baby foods and medical supplies.

Entire Amount Raised

The entire 2.9 million dollars was raised. Others participating in the fund-raising drive were Gen. Lucius Clay, head of an advisory committee aiding the families of the prisoners; Robert Anderson, former secretary of the treasury, and Robert H. Knight, former general counsel of the treasury.

The money was made available to Castro thru a bank in Canada as normal relations with the communist country have been cut off by the United States government.

Exiles Confirm Payment

[Chicago Tribune Press Service]

Miami, Dec. 26—The Cuban families committee today confirmed that Premier Fidel Castro was paid \$2,925,000 in cash for the ransom of 60 wounded Bay of Pigs prisoners who were freed last April 14.

Ernesto Freyre, secretary of the committee, said the sum was deposited in the Royal Bank of Canada in Montreal for payment to the Castro government.

"Castro insisted that this was 'a prior and preferable requirement' before the 1,113 prisoners who were returned Sunday and Monday could be released," Freyre said. "The families committee had promised to pay Castro that amount for the wounded prisoners. This was the only cash transaction involved in the entire prisoners exchange deal."

Freyre said he did not know where the money came from.

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